it advisable that, because one man is indisposed, the work of the Assembly should not be abrogated. If the Dewan can be duly authorised by the Ruler to receive the representations of members, equally so can any other officer, in the absence of the Dewan, be duly authorised to receive the representations."

I can assure you that I have been duly authorised to conduct the proceedings of this Assembly during the Dewan's abesnce.

The representations of the members present were then proceeded with.

87. Improvement of Punja cultivation in Kuttanad.

MR. P. AMRITHANATHA IYER (*Member, Ambalapuzha taluk, Group I*)pointed out of the urgent necessity for concerting measures for the promotion of agriculture in the country. He urged Government to watch the action taken by the Government of India on the report of the Indian Agricultural Commission and to introduce similar measures into Travancore.

Speaking on the local needs of Kuttanad, the member made the following suggestions:—

Agricultural boards should be established, preferably one for each pakuthi, in Kuttanad. The Irrigation Board Committee had recommended the formation of such boards. The main function of the boards should be to settle the disputes commonly arising among *punja* cultivators in regard to the putting up of bunds, draining of fields etc. Under the existing rules Tahsildars were authorised to interfere in such matters. But agricultural boards would be able to do the work more efficiently. As regards the constitution of the boards the members might be either elected or nominated. The boards might be formed at least experimentally for a fixed period.

Section 23 of the Irrigation Regulation should be amended so as to enable the cost of the works contemplated in the section being recovered from the defaulting proprietor by attachment of the crops harvested in the months of Meenam and Medom when the civil courts were not in session.

Canals and water-ways in Kuttanad should be improved and protected from encroachments. Some canals, as for example, the Chennankari canal had been blocked by encroachments. This should not be allowed Reserved areas near the sources of rivers should not also be assigned for private occupation. Separate allotments should be provided in the budget for the improvement of the canals and water-ways of Kuttanad.

Kari lands should be reserved at Prakad, Vechur and other places for growing grass and shrubs for *punja* cultivation and for pasture of cattle until sun-hemp and dwanja proved to be proper substitutes.

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A manure depot should be established at a central place in Kuttanad, like Pulincunnu. A cattle pound should be attached to the depot so as to prevent crops being damaged by stray cattle. A competent officer should be put in charge of the depot and he should also be required to do propaganda work in regard to the use of artificial manures.

Competent officers of the Agricultural Department should be deputed to deliver periodical lectures on improved means of sowing, ploughing, manuring and transplanting at various places in Kuttanad. The department should also combat the spread of plant-pests.

An agricultural and economic survey should be held of Kuttanad No real progress could be made in agriculture without full and accurate statistics. The value of these for both the farmer and the trader was acknowledged on all hands. The need for an industrial survey of Travancore was pointed out by the Unemployment Enquiry Committee. It might be done along with the proposed economic survey. The survey might be carried out by a Commission consisting of the Director of Industries, the Director of Agriculture, a professor of Economics and a few non-official members. They should enquire *inter alia* into the question of annual cultivation of *punja* lands. Statistics of produce and consumption of all food materials should also be prepared, especially that of paddy.

The Alleppey-Changanachery canal should be completed soon.

A canal should be opened through S. Nos. 179/6, 179/13, 108/4, 108/7 etc., to join the Champakulam river with the canal to the west of the Thollairom *padam*.

The portion of the Manimala river between Ekkapurattu Mali and Edattua should be deepened and a canal should be opened from Chakola to the river on the west.

The road from Takazhi to Ambalapuzha should be gravelled and widened.

The construction of the proposed road from Alleppey to Changanachery should be investigated by a competent officer.

Ferries should be provided at Champakulam to cross the river between Champakulam and Kottabhagom, at Kainakari to cross the river near the local Middle School, and at Alleppey between Alleppey and Kainakari.

A bridge should be constructed across the Thottapalli canal.

Boats used for agricultural purposes and all boats below 2 tons weight should be exempted from the operation of the Canals and Ferries Regulation. Under the existing rules even poor people, to whom the boats were merely necessaries of life, were not exempted from payment of tolls.

Special licences should not be allowed for the sale of toddy in Kuttanad during the harvesting season.

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PRESIDENT: Mr. P. Amrithanatha Iyer, your suggestion about the establishment of agricultural boards in each taluk is a matter on which the people should take the initiative and the Government will be ready to render all the necessary help.

MEMBER: Without an order from Government, how can the people take the initiative? The Government according to rules should constitute boards for certain areas.

PRESIDENT: Some draft rules were framed by Government for the constitution of these boards which imposed a little local taxation to meet the expenses of these boards. I also understand that the people have not been showing their willingness to pay the tax.

MEMBER: I pointed out that there was no necessity for any expenditure.

PRESIDENT: Do you mean to say that the constitution of the board will not cost any expenditure to Government whatever?

The Member said that it would not cost an appreciable amount and that was why he suggested the measure to be carried out at least as an experiment and that the existing pakuthi staff would be sufficient for the work.

PRESIDENT: If it is found that the cost will be very small the Government will consider your proposal. As for the formation of the Irrigation Boards the draft rules have been referred to the Additional Head Sirkar Vakil.

As regards the reservation of kari lands in Porakad and other places for brush-wood cultivation, the Director of Agriculture is of opinion that it will mean too much waste of money to cultivate grass and shrubs merely for brush-wood and he has thus far found that the cultivation of sun hemp wil be very costly, out of all proportion to its utility. So he is now experimenting with some cheaper kind of grass. As soon as the results of the experiments are known, Government will consider the matter.

MEMBER: These lands should be reserved and not registered away till it is practically illustrated to the people.

PRESIDENT: The Government will take into consideration your suggestion.

As for the periodical lectures on improved methods of cultivation the Director of Agriculture will be prepared to arrange with his officers to deliver a series of lectures in your taluk

As regards the economic survey for improving paddy cultivation, there was a suggestion by the Economic Development Board to appoint a committee. But the Government have found that a committee will not just at present serve any useful purpose and they are awaiting further consideration of the matter.

MEMBER: Only to enquire into the causes of failure of paddy cultivation in Kuttanad. What I now suggest was an agricultural

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and an economic survey so that the people of Kuttanad may be benefited by the economic survey. I understand that the Madras Government has appointed a committee and the Government may be benefited by the recommendations of the Madras Committee.

PRESIDENT: Government probably await the report of such bodies in other places.

As regards the Alleppey-Changanachery canal, the first two sections have been completed and the third section is engaging the attention of the Chief Engineer.

As regards the exemption of small boats from the operation of the rules, under the Canals and Ferries Regulation, the Dewan has, as you said, given a sympathetic consideration to the question and the amendments to the rules are being considered by the Additional Head Sirkar Vakil.

I do not find the restriction of the number of toddy shops in the agenda. The matter will be referred to the Excise Commissioner.

88. The needs of Ambalapuzha.

MR. K. T. RAPHAEL (*Member, Ambalapuzha taluk, Group II*) spoke on the following needs of Ambalapuzha :—

The Thumpolli road should be repaired. A road should be opened between the Alleppey-Shertallai road and the beach *via* Poonkavu market. The Thathampalli road should be gravelled and maintained. The Alleppey-Puiayanvazhi road should be extended to Punnapra. The Matayan todu should be completed and extended up to the beach. The Alleppey-Shertallai canal should be extended up to Kalavur. The Alleppey-Changanachery canal should be opened. The Kuravan todu should be re-opened. Arrangements should be made for water-supply in Alleppey. Manure depots should be established at Mararikulam and Omanapuzha. The Kalavur dispensary should be converted into a hospital.

PRESIDENT: Mr. Raphael, I find that the Thumpolli road has been opened and gravelled by the ryots. Government can take up the maintenance of the road only after the road is handed over to Government. The Land Revenue and Income Tax Commissioner has been asked to acquire the land and after this is done Government will maintain the road. As regards a road between the Alleppey-Shertallai road and the beach *via* Poonkavu market, the Chief Engineer has got an estimate ready and orders will be passed on it soon. As regards the Thathampalli road, it is a road that has been opened by the Alleppey municipality, and that body should maintain it. Quite recently the municipality have addressed the Government asking them to take back all the roads handed over to the municipality. The subject is engaging the attention of Government.

As for the extension of the Alleppey-Pulayanvazhi road to Punnapra, there is already a road connecting the place and the road you ask

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